

VZCZCXYZ0028
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHDR #0043 0221354
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 221354Z JAN 09
FM AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8204

UNCLAS DAR ES SALAAM 000043

SIPDIS

FOR INR/R/MR, AF/PDPA, AND AF/E

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KPAO](#) [KMDR](#) [TZ](#)

SUBJECT: TANZANIA MEDIA REACTION: OBAMA-WORLD NOW WAITS FOR CHANGE

The January 22 edition of English language daily "The African" (circulation 10,000) carried an editorial commentary on page 8 entitled "Obama: World now waits for change," that liberally borrows from the President's inaugural address. Excerpts follow:

"History was finally completed on Tuesday, when Barack Obama, the first ever African-American was sworn in as the 44th American President - in a pledge that was only 35 words long.

The oath was a culmination of a year long grueling campaign that started with intra-party primaries and later ended arduous campaigns - the most costly in America's history.

During all that time, Obama was campaigning on the platform of 'change'-a slogan that was enthusiastically received by his compatriots after 8 long years of the Republican presidency under George W. Bush.

The latter's period that saw the country launching two wars - Afghanistan and Iraq - in which nearly 5,000 Americans got killed, not to mention those killed, maimed, wounded or displaced Iraqis or Afghans, men, women and children.

It was also the period that saw the U.S. fighting terrorism in the world in a unilateral campaign which many believe has ended in failure, as it did little to provide security at home while breeding legions of new enemies abroad.

The result was the alienation of America, especially by the Muslim world which translated the American anti-terrorism campaign as targeting Muslims.

So among the pledges that Obama made was to change the image of America in its relations with other states. And among the steps he took soon after taking office was an order to the military prosecutors in the Guantanamo war crimes tribunals to halt for 120 days, all pending cases.

So 'change' is certainly the word the world will be watching and this early move on Guantanamo indicates that we should expect more. Besides, his 2400-word inaugural address minced no words on this.

Noting that America was at war, with a far-reaching network of violence and hatred, with the economy badly weakened, as a consequence of greed and irresponsibility on the part of some, as well as 'collective failure to make hard choices and prepare the nation for a new age,' Obama said America was ready to play its role in ushering in a new era of peace and responsibility.

To America's foes he said his administration will be seeking a new way forward, based on mutual interest and mutual respect. He however, had strong words for leaders around the globe, especially in poor developing countries who seek to sow conflicts, or blame their society's ills on the West - that your people will judge you on what you can build, not what you destroy.

And on the question of bad governance and corruption, Obama told leaders who cling to power through the indulgence of these vices that they were on the wrong side of history, but promised that he

will extend a hand if they were willing to unclench their fists.

We very much agree with this new commitment by the U.S. and hope that our leaders - African leaders in particular, will take his extended hand of friendship."

ANDRE